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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

SUBJECT: "FORTNIGHTLY FOOD-SHOPPING TIPS." Information from the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and the Consumers' Counsel of the United States Department of Agriculture.

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Of course, when buying food for the family, the housewife has to choose from what is on her local market. She depends on her local marketing people for a lot of advice on what is likely to be a good buy. But in marketing, as in a good many other things, we sometimes can't see the forest for the trees -- It is sometimes a help to see the more general picture of market supplies throughout the country -- what fruits and vegetables and meats are likely to be plentiful and the best bargains.

Every couple of weeks, the Consumers' Counsel of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, gives us the general picture of the food supplies on the market. Today, the Consumers' Counsel tells us that here in August food supplies are likely to be a little larger than they were this time last year.

That is not all foods -- of course. We will have smaller supplies of beef, and butter and eggs, and poultry, and sweet potatoes. But we will probably have larger supplies of milk and cheese and pork and lard and lamb and fresh vegetables and melons and potatoes. And we will have more fruit, too, even though the fruit crops are not so big. Less fruit is going abroad and into canning and drying; so we are likely to have more fresh fruit on the market here at home.

But maybe you don't remember what market supplies of food were last year -- Well, never mind, let's take a closer look at our food supplies. And even if we don't have quite as much of some things, like turkey, for example, as we had last year, we will still have plenty -- and turkeys are still a good buy.



And August, you know, starts the season for fresh killed roasting chickens. Ordinarily, poultry supplies are larger and egg supplies are smaller in August than in July.

Beef and lamb probably will be more plentiful than they were last month, but pork supplies will be smaller. Ordinarily cattle and lamb slaughter increases in the late summer and fall, and reaches its high point for the season in October. On the other hand, hog slaughter is usually at its low point this month, and then expands during the remainder of the year. The last half of this year, the prospect is still for more pork and lamb, but less beef than last year. More pork will be coming on the market before the first of October.

But let's go on to the vegetables --- not much difference this month and last --- although this is the month when green corn reaches its high point. And we will have more fruit this month than in July. August is the big month for cantaloups, nectarines, huckleberries. Pear shipments are bigger than they were last month, and usually in August are almost as plentiful as September when they reach their high point.

Apple and grape marketings are also usually a little more plentiful in August than in July, but peach marketing decline. However, the 'Consumers' Counsel tells us that the seasonal decline in peach marketings may be less than usual this year due to the small early peach crop.

Watermelons are plentiful this year, and so are cantaloups. But the high point of the watermelon market season seems to have passed now, and fewer and fewer watermelons are likely to be coming to market from now on until the watermelon season ends next month. There again, it is well to remember that this is the general market picture.

The supplies of canned and dried fruits this year probably won't be actually as large as last year. Still the supplies of canned and dried fruits offered on



our markets may be larger, because our exports have been cut down and the supplies for export may have to find a market here at home.

As for oranges, the oranges marketed from August to October come from the summer crop in California, and that crop is considerably larger than it was last year. The heavy winter orange shipments get under way in October, and grapefruit usually commences to move to market in volume in September. All in all, it seems as if the orange and grapefruit supplies this winter may be close to the record large supplies of year before last. That means, plenty on our markets.

Plenty of fresh fruit, canned fruit, dried fruit, fresh vegetables, meat, eggs, and poultry. A little more butter, and considerably more cheese and evaporated milk than last year. In fact, if weather conditions continue favorable, it looks as if milk production during the late summer and fall may be close to the record production.

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